

Message Text

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PAGE 01 EC BRU 01029 182031Z

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ACTION SS-30

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION OECD PARIS UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L EC BRUSSELS 1029

EXDIS

STATE ALSO FOR T/IEP

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, EEC, US

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON ENERGY CONFERENCE: ORGANIZING
MEETING OF COORDINATING GROUP

REF: STATE 32421

1. SUMMARY: WE INFORMED COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT
SOAMES THAT INVITATIONS ARE BEING EXTENDED FOR NEXT
WEEK'S MEETING OF THE COORDINATING GROUP TO THE
TWELVE COUNTRIESWHICH PARTICIPATED IN THE WASHINGTON
CONFERENCE AND THAT WE WOULD WELCOME THE COMMISSION'S
PRESENCE BUT WOULD AWAIT ITS REACTION BEFORE FORMALLY
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PAGE 02 EC BRU 01029 182031Z

EXTENDING AN INVITATION. SOAMES SAID THAT THE

DECISION ON THIS SUBJECT WOULD NOT BE MADE BY THE COMMISSION: IT IS A MATTER FOR THE MEMBER STATES ACTING AS A COMMUNITY. END SUMMARY.

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFTTEL, AMBASSADOR GREENWALD CALLED ON EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SOAMES (WHO WAS JOINED BY EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR GENERAL WELLENSTEIN) FEBRUARY 18 TO INFORM THE COMMISSION (ORTOLI IS IN JAPAN) THAT WE ARE INVITING THE TWELVE COUNTRIES WHICH PARTICIPATED IN THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE TO A MEETING OF THE COORDINATING GROUP ON FEBRUARY 25. AMBASSADOR GREENWALD SAID WE WOULD WELCOME THE COMMISSION'S PARTICIPATION IN THE MEETING BUT WANTED TO EXPLORE THE SITUATION IN LIGHT OF THE FRENCH ATTITUDE.

3. BEFORE SOAMES COULD RESPOND, WELLENSTEIN REPORTED HE HAD BEEN INFORMED BY THE GERMAN PERMANENT DELEGATION THAT THEY WERE PLANNING TO BRING UP THE QUESTION OF PARTICIPATION IN THE COORDINATING GROUP AT A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES (COREPER) THIS WEEK. COREPER WOULD PRESUMABLY ALSO DISCUSS THE ROLE OF THE COMMISSION.

4. SOAMES SAID HE COULD NOT GIVE AN OFFICIAL RESPONSE SINCE COMMISSION PARTICIPATION DEPENDED ON THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE, I.E. THE MEMBER STATES. WHILE SOME MEMBER STATES MIGHT WANT THE COMMISSION TO BE PRESENT, THIS USUALLY REQUIRES PARTICIPATION OF THE COMMUNITY "AS SUCH." IN VIEW OF THE FRENCH ATTITUDE, SUCH A DECISION IS UNLIKELY. ON THE SUBSTANCE, SOAMES POINTED OUT THAT SUBJECTS TO BE DISCUSSED IN WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK WILL TOUCH UPON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THE COMMUNITY AND MUCH OF THE ANTICIPATED WORK OF THE GROUP HAS ALREADY BEEN AGREED TO BY THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING FRANCE. FURTHERMORE, THE COMMISSION STILL HAS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR AN EC COMMON ENERGY POLICY WHICH WILL BE CLOSELY RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE COORDINATING GROUP. FOR THESE REASONS, THE COMMISSION WOULD PROBABLY WANT TO PARTICIPATE.
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 EC BRU 01029 182031Z

5. WELLENSTEIN SAID THE US WAS WISE IN NOT EXTENDING AN INVITATION TO THE COMMISSION UNTIL ITS POSITION IS CLARIFIED. HE POINTED OUT THAT PRECEDENT EXISTS FOR THE PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL GROUPS BY ONLY SOME MEMBER STATES PLUS THE COMMISSION, FOR EXAMPLE, THE HIGH-LEVEL GROUP OF THE OECD OIL COMMITTEE, AND WHILE IT IS NOT UNTHINKABLE THAT SUCH A SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND

IN THE PRESENT CASE, IT IS IMPROBABLE.

6. AT THE END OF THE MEETING SOAMES REPEATED THE VIEW THAT IT IS NOT FOR THE COMMISSION TO SAY WHETHER IT WILL PARTICIPATE. THE COMMUNITY AS SUCH MUST DECIDE WHETHER IT GOES AS THE COMMUNITY OR EXCLUSIVELY AS MEMBER STATES. HE SAID " THE COMMUNITY IS THE MEMBER STATES" AND THIS DECISION IS UP TO THEM; THEY ARE AWARE OF THE COMMISSION'S VIEWS AND OF ITS DESIRE TO TAKE PART IF THE DECISION IS MADE TO HAVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION. HE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO MAKE CLEAR TO THE MEMBER STATES THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO HAVE THEM PARTICIPATE AS A COMMUNITY, ALONG WITH THE COMMISSION.

7. WE ALSO INFORMED THE DEPUTY CHEFS DE CABINET OF COMMISSION PRESIDENT ORTOLI AND VICE PRESIDENT SIMONET. MALVE, ORTOLI'S CHEF DE CABINET, SAID HE WOULD TELEPHONE THE INFORMATION TO ORTOLI IMMEDIATELY.

8. COMMENT: SOAMES AND WELLENSTEIN SEEMED TO HAVE LINGERING SHELL-SHOCK FROM THEIR EXPERIENCES IN WASHINGTON AND OTHER RECENT EVENTS WHICH HAVE ROCKED THE COMMUNITY. BUT THEIR PESSIMISTIC ASSESSMENT IS PROBABLY ACCURATE. GREENWALD

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